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WORDS AND THINGS

IS GERMANY A *PAYS LÉGAL*, OR IS IT ALREADY A *PAYS RÉEL*? How can one write meaningfully about the social and political culture of a country which, after decades of division, has only recently recovered its state unity? Is it not more appropriate to talk of social and political *cultures* that are still distinct, and are likely to remain so for quite some time?

There is a great deal of confusion about words. Is it only about words, or is it also about things? Take, for example, the term *neue Länder* (new states), meant to denote the five East German states plus the Eastern part of Berlin. Why “new?” After all, an East German *Land* (state) like Saxony is in fact a few hundred years older as a political entity than, for example, North Rhine-Westphalia, created as late as 1946. Saxony is “new” only because it joined the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1990. More precisely, it is *called* new because the West Germans perceive it as such. And yet, most East Germans also use the term *neue Länder*; no doubt *neue Länder* sounds less unfriendly than *ehemalige DDR* (the former GDR), more refreshing than *Beitrittsgebiet* (acceding area: an ugly, though legally correct expression invented by an anonymous West German bureaucrat).

Take another example. What is one to call the pre-reunified Federal Republic of Germany? Most call it *die alte* (the old); some call it *die frühere Bundesrepublik* (the former Federal Republic), as if it had suddenly disappeared. Still others prefer the seemingly neutral term *Westdeutschland* (which can either mean western Ger-

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many with a small “w” or West Germany), corresponding to *Ostdeutschland* (eastern or East Germany) for the “new” states. Again, is this mere quarreling about words?

One may also spend time discussing whether *Wiedervereinigung* (reunification), *Vereinigung* (unification), or *Einigung* (an untranslatable cross between agreement and unification, gingered up by a small dose of togetherness) denotes what happened on October 3, 1990. Adherents of *Einigung* point to the *Einigungsvertrag* of August 31, 1990, the official short name for the “Treaty on the Establishment of German Unity” between the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). A majority of German journalists and politicians prefer *Vereinigung*. What they mean to convey, wittingly or unwittingly, is that today’s Germany is neither Kaiser Wilhelm’s *Reich* nor something very much nastier. The hidden presumption is that history began in 1949 when the Federal Republic and the GDR were founded: *ex nihilo*, on no-man’s soil, so to speak. In Germany’s European neighborhood, people use the word reunification. For them, Germany (“a former country in central Europe,” as the Random House Dictionary of the English Language used to define it) is back again. What kind of Germany? You do not escape the question by resorting to words.¹

EAST GOES WEST

What then, is the real thing? The least sophisticated answer belongs to what can be called the “Fourth Reich” variant: “I think Germans collectively are unsound. I think they have a gene loose, though I don’t know what the gene is.”² The emphasis is on “collectively”; it appeals to the eternal myths about “national character.” According to a second answer, united Germany is the merry old Federal Republic (or the “Bonn Republic,” as some prefer to call it now) writ large, expanded by five “new” *Länder*. The “Bonn Republic” theorem presumes that nothing has really changed. Is this not a fundamental error?

Germany was reunified by accession of the “new” *Länder* to the Federal Republic. Minor exceptions notwithstanding, this meant that the constitutional, political, legal, and economic system of the country’s Western part was instantly adopted by the East. Democratic legitimation for this procedure was provided by the East

German *Volkskammer* election on March 18, 1990. An overwhelming majority of 75 percent voted in favor of parties that had strongly advocated the accession path to state unity during the election campaign. The competing models were implicitly rejected: maintaining the division of Germany and building up a truly democratic GDR on the one hand, or creating a single German state under a new constitution, to which East and West would accede, on the other. Both options were more or less inspired by “third road” visions, ideas of some German *Sonderweg* (separate course) between “capitalism” and “socialism,” of pacifist neutrality vis-à-vis so-called “Rambo” America and what was still then Soviet Russia.

The Bonn Republic theorem is supported also by the trivial, but not unimportant, fact that three-quarters of the German population lives in the West, that an even much greater portion of the country's national product is created there. In essence, though, the massive preponderance of the West is based on the demonstrated superiority of free democracy and open society as opposed to centralized authoritarian systems. Even before the Berlin Wall fell, the collective wishes and dreams of Germans followed a one-way street from East to West. In many respects, the path of seventeen million East Germans after World War II may be seen as a detour full of privations towards the modernization and Westernization granted the West Germans during the same period, thanks in considerable part to American farsightedness.

Claiming to be the main road of postwar German history was a central element of the Federal Republic's *raison d'état* from the outset. The West Germans built a free democracy and an open society “also on behalf of those Germans who were prevented from participating,” as the Basic Law (constitution) of 1949 put it. West German hubris? Only if it is arrogant to say that liberty is superior to oppression; only if the West Germans mean to compliment themselves for individual merit—which many of them are inclined to do nowadays—accusing the East Germans of individual failure.

The East German rulers understood very well that the Federal Republic's “all-German” claim was a permanent threat to their own legitimacy. Granted, the old Federal Republic did not constitute a full-fledged nation.³ This is why so many felt the irresistible need to waste energy and ink trying to solve the puzzle of what the (West) German true collective *Identität* (identity) might be. How-

ever, there was never any serious doubt that the West German state represented the best polity ever in German history: “civil, civilian, civilized,” as Timothy Garton Ash put it. The East German state never succeeded in providing a rationale for national identity either. The sole *raison d’être* left to the GDR was to represent the “socialist alternative to the FRG,”⁴ as Otto Reinhold, one of the leading East German ideologists, unequivocally put it. This was in August 1989, when a majority of West Germans still believed that the GDR would last for an eternity.

The greatest cultural achievement of the Federal Republic is the ease with which West Germans feel themselves to be a part of the West and its political civilization, a community of European nations which is continuously growing closer together. Today, European integration and Atlantic ties are at the core of Germany’s *raison d’état*. The main cultural challenge is to anchor this consciousness in the minds and hearts of East Germans: Western-mindedness is still significantly, though not dramatically, stronger among West than among East Germans.

There is, of course, no single criterion by which degrees of Westernization may be measured.⁵ One would certainly not call the United Kingdom a less “Western” country than Germany for being less pro-EC than Germany; the Danes ought not to be accused of a weaker cosmopolitan spirit for being more in favor of “restricting the rights of immigrants in the EC” than the Germans.⁶ A number of intersecting indicators would have to be used. They would, for instance, include adherence to or rejection of “Western” values; approval or disapproval of democracy and its way of life; strength or weakness of cosmopolitan (postnational and proforeigner) attitudes; and, not least, positive or negative views of European integration and NATO membership — or, more specifically, of France and the United States. It appears that no real dividing line can be drawn between “center Right” and “center Left” in terms of Western-mindedness: Among the members and adherents of the mainstream political parties, there is a broad pro-Western consensus, to which equally clear anti-Western resentments on the fringes correspond. Notwithstanding this, the social and political elites appear to be more pro-European than the general population; Christian Democrats⁷ tend to be more pro-NATO and pro-American than

Social Democrats; and postnational as well as proforeigner sentiments are stronger among younger than among older people.

One month after reunification, 77 percent in the West and 48 percent in the East declared themselves "in general satisfied with our [*sic*] political system" ("unsatisfied": West 13 percent, East 26 percent; "undecided": West 10 percent, East 26 percent). Of the younger generation, 47 percent in the West and 68 percent in the East endorsed the statement: "I am proud of being a German" ("not proud": West 48 percent, East 31 percent); 97 percent in the West and 83 percent in the East say they have made, or could think of making, friends with their non-German peers. As for attitudes towards the United States, nearly 75 percent of Germans view themselves as pro-American; 55 percent support maintaining a residual American military presence on German soil; 51 percent in the West and 37 percent in the East "like the Americans" ("undecided" or "no opinion": West 27 percent, East 40 percent).

What do the relatively high "undecided" and "no opinion" figures in East Germany indicate? First, they point to an obvious lack of information. Politically speaking, they mean that the odds are in favor of the West, but only if certain opportunities are seized. Political education in the "new" *Länder* must be intensified; international contacts of East Germans, particularly younger ones, need to be increased.⁸ However, there are encouraging signs that some of the old prejudices East Germans harbored toward the United States are starting to break down: for example, their support of a residual American military presence in Germany has doubled from 12 percent in 1991 to 24 percent in 1992 (in the West it increased from 43 percent in 1991 to 63 percent in 1992).

STABILITÄT ÜBER ALLES

All this would be quite reassuring but for the fact that in the younger generation no less than 63 percent in the West and 72 percent in the East oppose a European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The EMU project, stipulated by the Treaty of Maastricht, is meant to be a centerpiece of further European integration. The pollsters asked people whether they liked the idea of replacing the deutsche mark with a single European currency called the ECU ("Esperanto money," as chauvinist critics have dubbed it).

Most of them did not. This has to do with a basic trait of German political culture: the marked desire for stability—or, to put it more exactly, the loathing of instability. Many national goals are defined not in positive terms, but as “Never again!,” referring to errors, mistakes, and sins that paved the way for the National Socialist tyranny and, indirectly, the communist dictatorship of the GDR. If there was something like a civil religion in Germany, its liturgical expression would take the form of a cry for exorcism rather than a credo.

The abhorrence of instability expresses itself in the strong affection—almost devotion—for the deutsche mark, which has developed into a kind of national symbol. The hyperinflation of 1923, with its devastating consequences for Germany’s social and political stability, is among the traumatic experiences that have remained deeply fixed in the collective German conscience. Directly after the end of World War II, Germany suffered a second hyperinflation, which was brought to an end in 1948 in the three Western zones through a drastic monetary reform. Out of “Trizonia,” as it was then called, emerged a politically stable community: the old Federal Republic. The categorical imperative *Keine Experimente!* (No experiments!) became the most successful (West) German campaign slogan, a cantus firmus in accord not only with the pragmatic spirit of the 1950s. The opposing position—“No fear of experiments!”—(primarily expressed in the decade between 1965 and 1975, and, even more specifically, the years between the “student revolts” of 1968 and the Oil Crisis of 1973)⁹ did not long maintain the upper hand.

STRIVING FOR HARMONY

The German preference for maximum stability, corroborated by the success story of the old Federal Republic, explains to a great extent their striving for the broadest social and political consensus. The traditional German “yearning for synthesis,” as Ralf Dahrendorf puts it, also plays a role, though softened by the spirit of pluralistic competition: the search for compromise has become a strategy not to avoid conflict but to settle it in a civilized manner. In only a very superficial assessment is the spirit of Kaiser Wilhelm (the tendency to sweep domestic conflicts under the national rug) still alive. What

is alive though, is some memory of the devastating effects that sanguinary religious conflicts and other rivalries on German soil since the Reformation have had on the nation's ability to unite. The same holds true for recollections of historic times when Europe's center was torn between Great Power interests in East and West, North and South.

What would an investigation of German political rhetoric reveal? Most probably, a predilection for key concepts and catchwords that conjure up continuity and harmony in domestic as well as foreign affairs: *Friede* (peace), along with its derivatives such as *sozialer Friede* (social peace), *innerer Friede* (domestic peace), and *Friedenspflicht* (literally, peace obligation, the banning of "wild" strikes); *Versöhnung* (reconciliation) and *Verständigung* (understanding, agreement); *Normalisierung* (normalization) and *Normalität* (normality); *Dialog* (dialogue) and *Ausgleich* (balance, compromise); *Partnerschaft* (partnership), along with its derivatives *Sozialpartnerschaft* (social partnership) and *Sicherheitspartnerschaft* (security partnership); *Augenmass* (sense of proportion), *Vernunft* (common sense), and *Mitte* (literally center, meaning something like mainstream); *Kontinuität* (continuity), *Berechenbarkeit* (predictability), *Verlässlichkeit* (reliability), and *Behutsamkeit* (a mixture of caution and gentleness, the opposite of abruptness); peculiar, difficult to translate neologisms like *konzertierte Aktion*¹⁰ (literally, concerted action), *Solidarpakt*¹¹ (solidarity pact) or *Streitkultur* (culture of dispute; in this combination, the irenic *Kultur* neutralizes the abhorrent *Streit*). In such a dictionary of German political rhetoric, we cannot leave out the word *Geborgenheit* (an untranslatable cross between shelter and warmth), idealizing the actual living conditions in the former GDR. Even if fairly well heated, a prison is never a cozy place.

The jargon of harmony expresses both the patterns of behavior and the priorities which led to the success of the old Federal Republic, both in its domestic policy and in its dealings with its neighbors and partners as well as the international community. It also implies an "all-German" conception of the world which does not allow for Saddams and Skinheads, Mogadishus and Sarajevos, "ethnic cleansing" and fundamentalist terror. Perhaps—mind bewitched by language—it even plays a part in forming a rose-colored view of the world. At any rate, it is difficult for many Germans today to believe

that there are problems and conflicts that cannot be overcome simply through social work and support groups, appeals to common sense and positive encouragement.

At the beginning of 1991, the German peace movement made a deeply disturbing discovery: unconditional pacifism is counterproductive; it only emboldens aggressive dictators. The decisive lesson of the 1930s is not simply “Never again war!” but “Never again appeasement in the manner of Munich!” One cannot wipe aggression off the face of the earth by simply giving in to it. This also holds for domestic policy: The series of xenophobic arson attacks since the events of Hoyerswerda in the autumn of 1991 taught many German supporters of an unquestioning tolerance that, in the interest of a successful battle against terrorist violence and political extremism, you cannot do without a reasonable dose of “law and order,” sustained by a more efficient law enforcement system.

Reunification has not weakened the general desire for consensus in Germany; indeed, it has strengthened it. Conflict is less popular among East than among West Germans, able to accustom themselves, over four decades, to the cold winds of economic and political competition. Fifty-eight percent in the East fully approve of the statement “Instead of permanently fighting against each other, politicians should commonly act in the same direction” (*an einem Strang ziehen*); in the West, only 39 percent would endorse that view. As for the statement “It is the job of politics to give the citizens a feeling of *Geborgenheit*,” the differences are even more striking: 58 percent in the East fully agree, as opposed to 31 percent in the West. During the East German steelworkers’ strike in the spring of 1993, a television journalist asked an anonymous man on the street whether he deplored the strike, choreographed and directed principally by West German trade-union leaders. The worker’s disarming answer—quoted from memory—was: “No. After all, they are better superiors (*Vorgesetzte*) than the former (the Communist) ones used to be.” Did he mean to say that he believes in the professional qualities of West German trade-union leaders when it comes to being tough in dealing with obstinate entrepreneurs? Those who like stereotyping may find his reply very German: disobedience out of obedience. It is true that many West Germans feel that the GDR preserved an old-fashioned, petit bourgeois kind of Germanness, now completely alien to them. However, if they

were compelled to face even a small part of the massive changes they expect their Eastern compatriots to accept without muttering, they would react with more impatience, and some would revolt.

It is well-known that people tend to cherish most what they miss. The mechanisms of stability and consensus, of continuity and harmony (whose East German caricature used to be state-run *Geborgenheit*) do not work on the "all-German" level yet. Inevitably, there is a deep feeling of unease that expresses itself in a broadening gap between a high degree of contentment with one's private situation, especially among young people,¹² and a growing sense of insecurity or uncertainty as to overall developments. At the beginning of 1993, 47 percent in the West and 44 percent in the East said they were optimistic as far as their personal prospects were concerned ("partly optimistic": West 40 percent, East 48 percent; "pessimistic": West 4 percent, East 8 percent); in contrast, only 9 percent in the West and 12 percent in the East were optimistic with regard to the "political perspectives" in general ("partly optimistic": West 60 percent, East 61 percent; "pessimistic": West 20 percent, East 26 percent).¹³ Twenty-eight percent in the West and 32 percent in the East no longer feel happy about reunification; 55 percent in the West and 41 percent in the East say they have been and remain favorable to reunification.¹⁴

That the old Federal Republic was a stronghold of general harmony is as much a nostalgic myth as the fairy tale of GDR *Geborgenheit*. However, those who held responsible positions in society and politics developed the skill of healing wounds torn open by passionate controversies of the great national questions. Three examples should suffice: 1) the introduction of a *Soziale Marktwirtschaft* (social market economy) associated with Ludwig Erhard; 2) the *Westbindung* (the integration of the Federal Republic into the European-Atlantic Community) carried out by Konrad Adenauer; and 3) the *Ostpolitik* of Willy Brandt. In the first two instances, the Social Democrats (SPD) and in the latter the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), after long internal debates, renounced all "revisionist" policies. The only major exception, interestingly, was the fierce controversy which shook the Federal Republic in the early 1980s when American intermediate nuclear missiles (INF) were to be deployed on West German soil, following NATO's double-track decision of 1979. It was mainly over this subject that Chancellor

Helmut Schmidt lost the majority within his own party, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). The pacifist issue has never really been put to rest; it simply seemed to have become obsolete by what happened in 1989–1990. But the legacy of the unsettled dispute remains. Should Germany be prepared, for instance, to support militarily UN peacekeeping and peacemaking operations? The Federal Republic would probably have had to answer that question whether or not reunification had occurred.

SOCIAL CONTRACTS (WEST)

Geborgenheit is the opposite of *Angst*, one of those German words which, like *Kindergarten*, have found their way into the English language. As such, it is the code word for *Teuto-Pessimismus* (Teutonic pessimism), as Karl Dietrich Bracher affectionately dubbed his compatriots' notorious appetite for biting their fingernails. Yet *Angst* can have other than paralyzing effects; it may also release inventive forces, liberate productive energies, become a motor of change. Stability does not necessarily mean immobility; it may also set the framework for an extraordinary dynamic. This happened repeatedly in the old Federal Republic, and it built the foundation for a new social contract, constructed in the first instance as a survival pact. "Survival" meant overcoming poverty and chaotic socioeconomic conditions and, for the West Germans, securing protection from the expansionist goals of the Stalin-led Soviet Union. The rebuilding of the ruined country could succeed only through a great communal effort of all social groups; this recognition and resolve had a lasting impact.

In the former "Trizonia," the *Soziale Marktwirtschaft* created the parameters within which, out of the survival pact of the first hours, grew the *Sozialpartnerschaft* between employers and employees. That partnership effectively created a balance of interests between the two sides. The *Mitbestimmung* (codetermination) of the workers in factories played a major role in this. As a "unique social innovation brought to life with the help of the allies to weaken German heavy industry through union control," it became in time a great benefit for West German industry: The cogoverning of employees and their trade-union representatives on boards and committees has made factory standstills and painful reforms easier

to accept; it has been a force for learning and the sharing of responsibility.¹⁵ The *Friedenspflicht*, stipulated by legislation as well as wage negotiations through industry-wide arrangements of free collective bargaining (employers' associations and trade unions), reduced conflict inside individual companies. The trade unions were no longer organized, as in the Weimar Republic, according to ideological or political party preferences; structured by profession, huge amalgamations, at least nominally cross-party, became possible.

The term *Soziale Marktwirtschaft* is itself one of those "irenical formulas," as Alfred Müller-Armack put it, with which the vocabulary of German political rhetoric is so richly endowed. It describes a social and economic order in which competition and social balance are reconciled with each other—indeed, may be seen as two sides of the same coin. A comparable approach underlies the so-called *Produktivitätspakt* (productivity pact) between employers and employees—the basic understanding that wage increases and reduced working hours are tied to an increase in productivity so that cost stability and competitiveness are preserved. Such arrangements created the great West German pie of which there was a piece for everyone. This process, which happened with interruptions, on the whole seemed to be something that could be taken for granted. People altered their consumer habits, and after the *Fresswelle* (wave of gluttony) in the 1950s, travel, sex, and other such waves swept across the Federal Republic. Even many of the supposedly postmaterial values of the 1980s required a fairly full wallet: the proverbial estate in Tuscany, in which West Germans, tired of civilization, learned to spend their weekends enjoying bucolic tranquillity over good red wine, was never free.

Indeed, even the perfect management of industrial conflict led to a "new social question":¹⁶ Those who could no longer satisfy the increasing demands of the productivity pact, calling for efficiency and professional qualifications, fell out of work into the *soziales Netz* (roughly, social cushion). Unlike the United States, for example, there were no less demanding jobs available for less pay. In tandem, a second problem intensified: how to make nonorganizable interests, those who stand outside the working world—such as the unemployed or the elderly—count in a corporate society.¹⁷

Despite declarations to the contrary, the trade unions' concern was and is primarily their own constituencies, the employed. Al-

though they see themselves as “progressive,” they, like all large organizations, tend to defend the status quo. In these circumstances, a tacit understanding between employees and employers (including, of course, the public sector) has developed. The private sector tends to blame the federal legislature for the high nonwage costs of labor that weaken the German economy’s competitiveness. It is true, for example, that in 1992 employers had to pay an additional sum of DM 0.84 per DM 1 of wages for various social benefits (including paid days off). Of this sum, in fact, DM 0.47 could be attributed to industry-wide free collective bargaining or to special arrangements inside individual companies; only DM 0.37 was induced by legal obligation.

Another major risk of the West German consensus model has been encrustation: a sneaking loss of flexibility and dynamics. Conventional wisdom suggests that Germany’s current domestic problems are principally due to reunification. But this is less than half the truth. Although the public deficits and debts, for example, have strongly increased since reunification, and although Germany is not a net exporter of capital any longer, her overall financial situation is still not as bad as that of most of the major industrial countries, which do not have to meet the historic challenge of overcoming a communist legacy. Chancellor Kohl¹⁸ and others try to persuade their reluctant West German compatriots that many, probably most, of Germany’s present difficulties are rooted in structural dislocations that accumulated in the old Federal Republic, mainly consisting in a relative deterioration vis-à-vis competing economies that have become better than they were before. These problems were not caused by, but became more visible as a consequence of reunification—and of the rise of new competitors in Germany’s immediate East Central European neighborhood. To name but a few such problems: Germany has the shortest plant (machinery) running time in the European Community and by far the shortest weekly working hours. Her perfectionist bureaucracy is notorious for its exceedingly lengthy approval procedures. Her higher education system generates the oldest university students and her retirement system the youngest old-age pensioners; many Germans spend the first thirty years of their lives preparing themselves for jobs and the last twenty years recovering from them.

This is happening at a time when German society (West and East) is aging rapidly. Such a development, not least due to declining birthrates, is common in other industrial societies as well. But the German case is among the most dramatic. At the end of the nineteenth century, the ratio of men and women older than seventy-five and younger than twenty years of age was 1 to 79. By the end of the twentieth century, the ratio will be 1 to 14; almost 25 percent of the population will be over sixty years old. Whereas today one pension is financed by three employees (who had to contribute 18.7 percent of their gross income to the pension funds in 1990), the ratio may be 1 to 1 in the year 2020 (which would mean some 35 percent of an employee's gross income).

It has been argued that this development could be countered by a controlled immigration policy. The counterargument says this would at best represent a problem shift, for immigrants grow older, too. Be that as it may, it is true that there has been no, certainly no well-devised, German immigration policy to date. Only since the end of 1992 has the federal legislature begun to search seriously for a reasonable path between uncontrolled mass absorption of newcomers¹⁹ and a too restrictive naturalization of foreigners. A more liberal approach to the naturalization at least of second and third generation "foreigners" is badly needed. There are ample reasons for change, and not only in the "new" *Länder*.

THE CROWDED CENTER

In any comparison of Christian and Social Democrats, the absence of an articulated Left/Right dichotomy makes Germany's political culture different from that of many other countries. The orientation of West German—and now, apparently, of "all-German"—politics and its institutions toward the political mainstream corresponds to the striving for social consensus and harmony. In the 1950s, a three-party system (Christian, Social, and Free Democrats) developed on the federal level. Only in the beginning of the 1980s did the Greens join this triumvirate as the fourth party. The splintering of the party landscape, characteristic of the Weimar Republic and associated with a dramatic collapse of the political center, was prevented in the postwar years not least by the election statute which denied a party access to the *Bundestag* (Federal Parliament)

if it failed to garner more than 5 percent of the overall vote. More importantly, perhaps, the large parties—the Christian and Social Democrats—were able to absorb and thereby neutralize the political extremes. Indeed, in their own interest, which they very well understood, the Social Democrats were often obliged to woo voters who were susceptible to arguments from the extreme Right.²⁰

A strong institutional tendency toward political consensus stems also from the necessity of *kooperativer Föderalismus* (cooperative federalism). This is true above all when the majority in the *Bundestag* is different from that in the *Bundesrat*, where the *Länder*, represented by their governments, play a part in federal legislation. Even where parallel majorities exist in the two houses, the *Länder* are confident, assertive, and influential actors, often giving their vote only in exchange for hard currency, sometimes in the most literal sense. Their own interests may cross party lines, leading to the most diverse and shifting ad hoc coalitions: “East German *Länder* versus West German *Länder*” has become an additional possible configuration in a complex game made even more complex by reunification.

Christian and Social Democrats can be successful in elections only if they present themselves as *Volksparteien* (people’s parties). Their object is to get as many voters as possible, and not to limit themselves only to segments of the electorate. Until now, the Christian and Social Democrats were able to control the government only when they were supported by the Free Democrats in a coalition. Only once in the history of the Federal Republic, from 1957 to 1961, did a single political group, the Christian Democrats, gain an absolute majority of votes on the federal level, not least because of its ingenious campaign slogan, *Keine Experimente!*

Competition for power has been a constant battle for the center. The profile and attraction of the established parties was almost never determined by their ideological positions on the Left/Right continuum. Rather, for the most part, it depended on the extent to which voters trusted them to resolve concrete (principally economic) problems pragmatically. Whenever the party profiles blurred—as, for example, during the Kiesinger/Brandt coalition of 1966–1969—or whenever the traditional political parties’ ability to cope with pressing issues was called into question, gains were made by populist parties on the extreme Right or by oppositional movements on the far Left. Today, an increasing number of voters, feeling the need

to protest, simply refrain from voting at all. Such protest has reached unprecedented proportions in the West (approximately 30 percent) and in the East (approximately 40 percent)²¹ where, for obvious reasons, traditional party allegiances are much weaker. The earlier zero-sum game—the proposition that gains of the Christian Democrats are automatically losses for the Social Democrats and vice versa—no longer applies.

“No experiments!,” on the other hand, still remains the motto that Germans (West and East) vote for, that they consider especially important. Landslide changes in federal elections occurred only once, in 1953; it is not likely to be repeated. Over the long term, large crises have not so far “diminished faith in the political system; rather they have strengthened it.”²² The parade of lights at the end of 1992 and the beginning of 1993, by which millions in Germany demonstrated their solidarity against the terror of extreme right-wing gangs, is a sure sign that the centripetal powers are still dominant in Germany, having been momentarily paralyzed following the Rostock arson attack. Some will argue that “*Aux bougies, citoyens!*” does not suffice; that its only message is “Look at us! We are good Germans, out for a head count.”²³ Still, it is possible to interpret the *Lichterketten* as an attempt to reconquer the cultural hegemony for cosmopolitan values.²⁴

MORALPOLITIK

The culturally conditioned striving for consensus and harmony as well as the institutional tendency toward political common ground compensate in part for the lack of a relatively homogeneous elite, formed in the *grandes écoles* or at ivy league universities, which continually reproduces itself in an aristocratic-meritocratic system. Such a band hands down, from generation to generation, a certain vision of a country's role and duties, its status in the community of nations. “In Germany after the Second World War,” Wolfgang Zapf observed in 1965,

the individual sectors—politics, administration, economy, trade unions, church, media—were relatively homogenous. There is, however, a noticeable distance between them. The exchange within the sectors is sometimes high, but decreases considerably “toward the outside.” There is no free exchange within the elite as a whole. . . . This fact

may make a few characteristics of the post-war society more understandable, such as the lack of self-confidence and coherence at the top, the lack of a “high society” to set the tone, and the relative division between power, income and prestige.²⁵

Little has changed in the last three decades. Yet, the term *classe politique* has been used increasingly to describe the power elite, particularly in West Germany. Such terms, perhaps more applicable to the sociopolitical context of other countries, must be used with caution. While it is true that the permeability between individual social sectors has increased in Germany, it is also true that political careers are principally planned and promoted within the parameters of the political parties. If only relatively small numbers of *Seiteneinsteiger*, gifted dilettantes, enter politics “from the side,” it is because in a modern, increasingly complex society, politics is not immune to the general trend toward specialization and professionalization. The individualization of life-styles leads to a retreat into the private realm; the willingness to take public office diminishes; the political parties themselves develop into unattractive “dinosaurs of democracy.”²⁶

In Germany, as in most other Western democracies, the electronic media contribute to a depoliticization of the public, degrading politics, making it a sector of increasingly trivial entertainment. This encourages a trend toward carefully groomed political showmasters—a tendency that may be countered, at least for a time, by the new style introduced by East German politicians. Many, though not including the old Communists, bring a refreshing element of authenticity to their work, deeply rooted in their bitter personal experience under the GDR regime. No jargon. No worn-out formulas. No “keep smiling.” While some may see it as unprofessional, it contributes to a regeneration of the overall political atmosphere.

It is sometimes argued that the absence of a metropolitan center where members of cabinet, economic bosses, leaders of the church, field marshals, media czars, university professors, and top writers can share the same space and communicate easily is central to the problem of recruiting new faces into politics, of overcoming what is perceived as parochialism in foreign affairs, in short, Germany’s “culture of reticence.” Some attach high hope to the planned transition of parliament and government to Berlin, where, in the shadow

of the Brandenburg Gate, a self-confident and coherent German *classe politique* is expected to emerge. Such hope may prove to be an illusion. It fails to take into account that traditions are not created by volition; they need time to grow. Metropolitan architecture, however grandiose, cannot replace maturation. Germany, having reacquired her full sovereignty only in 1990, is not yet endowed with what might be called mental sovereignty. This would require her leaders to develop an enlightened definition of Germany's national interests, which, in all vital matters, would run parallel to those of her neighbors. It would exclude defensiveness as well as assertiveness, cheap moralizing no less than cynical *Realpolitik*.

The lack of a political class proper turns out to be a disadvantage when so much time is required for metapolitical debates about questions of style and manners. It is not one of the eminent strengths of Germans (if such a collective judgment may be permitted) to find their way between exaggerated intimacy and exaggerated enmity in dealing with others. It is no paradox that discussions about *politische Kultur* (that is, about the rules of fair play in politics) are usually carried out aggressively in tones of indignation. The opponent is invariably the one who is politically uncultivated. The battle for "moral hegemony" should be seen as an element of the battle for power. However, no one ever articulates this; power is labeled indecent, demonic. This all changes, of course, when one gains power oneself; it is rechristened "responsibility."

The most recent addition to the foreign policy vocabulary is the slightly Orwellian neologism *Verantwortungspolitik* (literally, responsibility politics), supposed to be the opposite of *Machtpolitik* (power politics).²⁷ *Verantwortungspolitik* may be defined as the politics of verbalism and symbolism, the primacy of good intentions over good deeds (apart from giving money, increasingly scarce, and sheltering refugees,²⁸ always praiseworthy). When the German government, supported by an all-party consensus in the *Bundestag*, successfully promoted the international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia at the end of 1991—whether this was right or wrong will not be discussed here—Germany was exerting power, clearly by diplomatic means. In Germany, this was not considered an act of power. For Germans, only their intentions counted, and these were good, meaning moral. The idea that Germany was taking advantage of her strengthened position as a reunited country was felt to

be a hurtful accusation, as hurtful as the conspiracy theory that there was a plan afoot to expand into the Balkans and down the Danube. The Social Democrats' refusal to consent to more or less symbolic German participation in the UN operations for the protection of the civilian population in the post-Yugoslav war zones was thought also to be based on purely moral intentions. A self-contradiction? No: "The word '*Realpolitik*'," a satirist commented, "has been lost in the German language, and will no longer be needed; it lives on in other languages as a foreign expression. In place of it we urgently need the word '*Moralpolitik*' in order to label that which we, out of responsibility, refrain from doing."²⁹

CHANGE THROUGH STABILITY

The West German social and political path taken since the end of World War II represents a thoroughgoing modernization process—very much like the process that most other West European industrial states pursued during this same period. This is not to say, however, that some circumstances were not unique to Germany. National Socialism, and the war it unleashed, brought about momentous changes in society. In order to carry out its total claim to power, it had to "destroy the handed-down—in effect antiliberal—loyalties to region and religion, family and corporation."³⁰ In West Germany, the traditional milieus—especially the Catholic-rural and trade-union-industrial—were able to reorganize themselves after World War II, but the seeds of fundamental change had already been sown. The alleged "restoration" contributed to a structural stability that made social modernization possible. The disintegration of traditional milieus which accompanied this modernization process has been appropriately described as a "failure due to success."³¹

The twelve million refugees and expellees who came principally between 1945 and 1947 from the former Eastern (now Polish or Russian) territories of Germany and from Czechoslovakia, who, together with their offspring, constitute 20 to 25 percent of the present German population, deserve special mention. Instead of developing into an irredentist time bomb—or a kind of fifth estate—they became an additional agent of change.³² Their integration drastically diminished the tribal and confessional homogeneity

of the regions that took them in; their uprooting allowed them greater mobility and flexibility.

In the 1950s, the agrarian sector's contribution to West German economic life decreased three times more rapidly than in the previous one hundred years. The development of a service industry began late; the Federal Republic caught up with the other Western industrial states only in the 1960s. New middle classes arose, especially in the tertiary sector. Along with the increasing dissolution of traditional milieus, the core constituencies on which the Christian and Social Democrats could rely dwindled;³³ the share of floating voters rose.

In quite other ways, the communist regime of the Soviet Occupied Zone and the later GDR carried out its own destruction of traditional social structures, already initiated by the National Socialists. The "first workers' and farmers' state on German soil"—as it chose to call itself—took away class consciousness from the proletariat, land from the farmers, and independence from the free professions. The lack of a broad middle class today profoundly differentiates the social structure of East Germany from that of the West. Before the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, some three million Germans, who have to be added to the twelve million postwar refugees and expellees, had fled or migrated from East to West. A disproportionate number were highly qualified: self-employed, entrepreneurs, engineers, doctors, and lawyers. Accordingly, the Wall was "justified" by the East German rulers as an act of defense against West German "social aggression." But even after the Wall was built, there was a continuous brain drain from East to West. The communist rulers themselves expelled, "expatriated," or, yes, sold in return for West German ransom some of the most talented East German intellectuals, writers, and artists during the 1970s and 1980s. If an East German Václav Havel had existed, he would probably have been living in the Federal Republic. There was no such personality. Of the five Ministers President in the "new" *Länder*, three—all professional politicians—were imported from the West. Incidentally, intra-German "migration" has not come to an end after reunification. In 1992, some two hundred thousand Germans from the East went West, whereas only some 110,000 *Wessis* went East.

Until the middle of the 1960s, a fundamental consensus developed in the Federal Republic relating to the crucial domestic and foreign policy decisions of the late 1940s and 1950s. West Germans no longer saw their state as a provisional entity, a mere torso. The unresolved “German question” was increasingly seen to be a hindrance to the much desired *Normalität*. Along with growing prosperity, new views were expressed which can be roughly depicted by catchwords like “individualization,” “hedonism,” and “emancipation.” The “Protestant” ethic—appreciation for hard work, discipline, and austerity—went into decline.

From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, dramatic shifts occurred in the West German system of values. In this relatively short period, the educational goals of “independence and free will” became increasingly popular; the educational goals of “obedience and subordination,” as in other industrial societies, lost their attractiveness.³⁴ The “student revolts” of 1968 were at least as much a consequence as a cause of what some have called a “cultural revolution.” During this same period, antiliberal ideas of the New Left gained influence. This, above all, brought into question the basic consensus about parliamentary democracy, the social market economy, the Atlantic Alliance. In the GDR, a noticeable change in values took place a full decade later, between 1975 and 1985. At least among the youth, “individualistic, informal, hedonistic values”³⁵ gained new favor.

FRAGMENTATIONS

In West Germany, opposing forces were constantly called into action by the modernization process and its social, psychological, and ecological costs. The *Modernisierungsverlierer* (literally, the losers from modernization), especially those in the lower middle classes, became susceptible to antiestablishment (that is, to a large extent, *poujadiste*) parties on the extreme Right. The New Left of the late 1960s and early 1970s and the *Ökopax* (environmentalist and pacifist) movement of the 1980s, which partly grew out of the New Left, developed an anticivilization fundamentalism, not altogether different from the one that had been a centerpiece of right-wing ideologies in times more remote. It is, therefore, no surprise that this “romantic relapse,” as Richard Löwenthal has called it,

was not in the least accompanied by a rehabilitation of certain elements of "Germanic ideology," to use a term coined by Fritz Stern, with its contrast of *Kultur* (deep, idealistic) and *Zivilisation* (shallow, commercial). In its most vulgar form, this ideology expressed itself—as had already been the case when it was a stronghold of right-wing extremism—as anti-Americanism. The basic tenets of democracy, including, for example, majority rule and state monopoly of coercion were brought into question. The Greens, however unintentionally, contributed to the strengthening of those who could only see the dark side of modernization.

Germany—until now in the West, but today in the East as well—shares a fundamental experience with other Western democracies: On the one hand, modernity implies an increase in options for the individual; on the other, it means a loosening of ligatures, including a withering away of the committed *citoyen*. Even in Germany, reputed to be the world champion in *Vereinsmeierei* ("clubism" is only a rough approximation), more and more people are opting for the facilities of a commercial fitness center in order to stay fit, preferring it to a permanent tie to a *Sportverein* (athletic or sports club). Religious alliances, of far greater significance, are also weakening. In this, the differences between the country's Western and Eastern parts are enormous: Among young people, 43 percent in the West (4 percent in the East) claim to be Catholic, 43 percent in the West (17 percent in the East) acknowledge that they are Protestant, and 11 percent in the West (79 percent in the East) say they do not adhere to any religious community.

Serious problems arise when dissolution, imaginary or not, of familiar patterns becomes a new source of *Angst*. This *Angst* appears to be a fertile ground for new forms of violence, of which xenophobic attacks by youth gangs represents only one, though a particularly grave and visible form of aggression. Antiforeigner violence is not, as some armchair sociologists have conjectured, a specter haunting merely the big cities. It is common in small towns and rural areas that used to be (or perceived themselves to be) free of such problems, having only recently experienced a mass influx of immigrants. Of the acts of xenophobic violence, 39.2 percent have been perpetrated in small towns (ten thousand to fifty thousand inhabitants), 20.5 percent in the rural areas, 22.3 percent in the metropolises, and 18 percent in medium-sized cities.³⁶

In Germany today, the problems of social fragmentation are pronounced. The healing process between East and West is proving to be very slow. New wounds are constantly being torn open that retard the process of overcoming mutual estrangement between *Wessis* and *Ossis*. The latter complain, legitimately, about *Wessi* arrogance, the former complain about *Ossi* self-pity (which may also exist in the beholders' eyes). The project of *innere Einheit* (literally, internal unity, something like social merger as opposed to *staatliche Einheit*, state unity, already accomplished) embraces much more than a purely economic challenge; it points to "mental" differences that may last for a generation or longer.

Second, the Eastern part of German society has been basically atomized for more than four decades by a communist dictatorship that considered every association it could not control to be a threat to its own total claim to power. The much lauded "niches" in the former GDR—including the *Geborgenheit* they offered—were in reality places of temporary refuge only from this total state claim. They cannot serve as building elements of a civil society. Even in the supposed enclaves free from state control, particularly those which the Protestant Church was able to provide for those opposed to the regime, there was no real protection from the agents of the *Stasi*, the State Security Service. Today, the unavoidable structural transformations in the "new" *Länder* are threatening to destroy that minimum social bond which integration into an ordered working world seemed to offer.

Finally, important parts of the elite in Germany, both in the East and in the West, who might have been expected to play a leadership role in the orientation process are at present principally concerned with a self-critical analysis of their most recent past—that is, their own silence in response to the harm done to individuals beyond the former Iron Curtain. It is not only that so many Western political and social scientists closed their eyes to the actual conditions in the GDR.³⁷ "Stability" was a code word for the dirty little secret which many West Germans shared with other West Europeans: a silent accord with the status quo, characterized by the seemingly innocent short formula "Yalta." There is already, and not only in Germany, an idealization of the "good old days," when the East-West conflict provided for a clear-cut international pattern, enabling all who had the good fortune to live west of the Iron Curtain to enjoy a pleasant

existence. This appeasement—*trahison des clercs* (and not only of *clercs*)—makes East German history an integral part of all German history, as indeed East European history must be seen as an integral part of Europe's history. The GDR rulers tried to create an East German "national" identity by shifting the moral burden for the National Socialist past on the old Federal Republic, by claiming an East German monopoly of "antifascism." Nowadays, many West Germans appear to believe that the communist past is a matter only their Eastern compatriots are obliged to cope with. Their argument, basically insincere though well disguised as liberal generosity and a sort of political correctness, says, "We should not be so patronizing as to wish to interfere with their problems. Let those affected, victims and perpetrators, find a way out for themselves."

PATRIOTISM

How can a new consensus be established from this difficult starting point? What is the glue that will keep — or could keep — the German nation together? Are there articles of faith that might constitute an "all-German" political credo, different from the mere exorcisms inspired by *Angst*, or the simple worship of the deutsche mark? The answer depends on whether the Germans will be able to develop a calm patriotism based not only on their indivisible history (not excluding its darkest chapters), their common cultural traditions, but also, and most importantly, on shared democratic values, civic responsibility for their own *respublica*, an active sense of solidarity and togetherness.

This is the true "challenge of normality," a condition neither Germany nor Europe has known for the greater part of the twentieth century. Hans Magnus Enzensberger's definition of what normality might mean in Germany today is a particularly helpful one:

Since we are no longer the world champions of Evil, we feel ourselves obligated to be the world champions of Good. We have to lead the way by setting a good example; we have to be (morally) better than the others. I find all this a bit warped. I would be happy enough if we could just be normal people in this regard, no worse and no better than the others. Normal civil conditions would suffice completely for me. Even the rest of the world would be content with that.³⁸

German patriotism is weakened from two sides. There is a premodern and a postmodern element in how Germans perceive their collective identity. The premodern element may be called “regionalism” or “regional tribalism,” a spice in what has been called “multi-German society.” To give a single example, the Weimar *Reichsverfassung* of 1919 defined the German nation (*Volk*) as a union of the German “tribes” (*einig in seinen Stämmen*); accordingly, German citizenship had been mediated through Saxon, Bavarian, Prussian, and other *Länder* citizenships, exceptions notwithstanding, until the National Socialists introduced a direct German nationality by the infamous *Reichsbürgergesetz*, which excluded the German Jews from *Reich* citizenship.³⁹ The postmodern element may be found in widespread postnational attitudes, described as attempts to be rid of the emotional burden of a difficult national history. They carry a positive element, genuine cosmopolitanism.

“Patriotism” is a word greeted with enormous reservation by postnational-minded West Germans. Behind it lies the *Angst* that patriotism may be misunderstood as ethnocentric chauvinism or jingoism. In fact, reunited Germany’s real, though unacknowledged problem may be the weakness of its republican consciousness, for which an enlightened patriotism might be a remedy. There is a telling story to illustrate this point: In order to compensate for the additional nonwage costs of the planned *Pflegeversicherung* (residential care insurance scheme), it has been suggested that one public holiday be dropped, thereby increasing the working year by one day. The churches strongly oppose the abolition of Whit-Monday; the trade unions refuse to allow May Day to be dropped as a public holiday. Some have proposed that October 3, the “Day of German Unity,” the *only* republican holiday celebrated in Germany, might be sacrificed. Is it possible to imagine French *citoyens* wishing to pay for a new social insurance scheme, however reasonable and necessary, by giving up their Quatorze Juillet? Would any American think of sacrificing Thanksgiving or Independence Day for such a purpose?

Postnational-minded Germans may object that there can be no patriotism without a *patria*. And what is the German *patria*? It appears to be characteristic of the Germans that the question “What is German?” never dies out. Roughly a century after Friedrich Nietzsche said this, Timothy Garton Ash, in a brilliant analysis of

the German reunification process in 1990, observed that for “the last forty years (some would say for the last two hundred) the question of German national identity has provoked some of the longest, deepest, most contorted answers ever given to any question by any branch of humankind.”⁴⁰ Have we at last discovered the German “loose gene?” Is Germany a *malade imaginaire*?

Yes and no. The identity issue certainly points to a real German problem in modern history, the incongruity of state and nation. To German ears, *Staat* and *Nation* remain two distinct concepts. It is also true that the “German question” can be put to rest finally if today’s Germany is contrasted with what she was during recent decades. Her most recent past may be expressed in the formula “one nation, two states”; her present-day situation may be described as “one state, two societies.” In 1990, the (once East) German writer Reiner Kunze said he expected of Germany that “after October 3, 1990, it will prepare itself for this day.”⁴¹ That paradox may be refined by saying that the Germans still have to *become* a nation through a *plébiscite de tous les jours*, through a process of learning by doing, which has barely begun. Fritz Stern has introduced the term “second chance” to describe Germany’s situation after her second state unification. Even if one does not subscribe to the proposition that Bismarck’s Reich and today’s Federal Republic confront a similar dilemma, such comparison may be useful as a heuristic tool.

One of the principal differences is that today’s Germany is no longer burdened by the mortgage of irredentism. There is a fundamental consensus, inside the country and among its neighbors, that the borders of the German state coincide with the borders of the German nation. The price, overwhelmingly caused by German guilt, involved the uprooting and expelling of twelve million from East Central and Eastern Europe. What remains are comparatively small “ethnic German” minorities in the East. For the time being, the Federal Republic feels a special humanitarian obligation towards these people. The claim to German citizenship of those who lost it because the areas in which they live now belong to Poland and Russia is treated as a constitutional right. The same holds true for those “ethnic Germans,” principally from Siberia and Central Asia (where they had been deported under Stalin) as well as Romania, who, as a consequence of National Socialism, suffer from the

accusation of having been disloyal to their “host” nations. It is important to note that most right-wing extremists in Germany today and many of their sympathizers consider “ethnic Germans” to be foreigners, no less so than asylum seekers from Sri Lanka or refugees from Bosnia.

Compare all this to Bismarck’s *Reich*: In those days, irredentism was a common sentiment referring principally to Austria, whose German-speaking population was thought to be an integral part of the German nation. The strong Polish and Danish and the large Catholic and Jewish minorities were suspected of disloyalty towards the *Reich*. Alsace and Lorraine remained a bone of contention between France and Germany. The German power elites after Bismarck were driven by an unsatiated yearning for a “place in the sun.” Not least because of the unprecedented success story of European integration after World War II, the contrast between that period and the conditions that now obtain could not be greater.

There is, however, one major legacy of the past that the Germans must still overcome: The statement “I am German” has not yet the same meaning as the statement “I am a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany.” For a transitional period, this problem remains to be coped with. “All-German” citizenship, which (from the old Federal Republic’s point of view) included the GDR inhabitants, had been an important brace holding together a divided nation for four decades. According to conventional wisdom, the issue is rooted in German *jus sanguinis* legislation as opposed to *jus soli*. This is not the real question. *Jus sanguinis* is a rule in most places in the world; children of American parents, for instance, are citizens of the United States even if born abroad. *Jus soli* and, of course, naturalization are additional ways of conferring citizenship. Apart from *jus sanguinis*, naturalization has always been a way to acquire German citizenship; the approximately five hundred thousand Poles who immigrated before World War I as permanent settlers in the Ruhr valley are but one example. What cannot be disputed, however, is that the German naturalization laws will have to become more generous. Under the Kohl government, a first legislative step in that direction was taken. As of January 1, 1991, new provisions—capable of and needing further amendment⁴²—give a claim to naturalization without considering “ethnic” criteria, such as descent or total assimilation.

Yet, formal naturalization is a necessary but not sufficient condition for full integration of “foreigners.” Here, German society is again in the middle of a learning process that will require some patience, and republican leadership. *Volk* (people) has a threefold meaning in German: *demos*, *laos*, and *ethnos*. In the end, *demos* should be the only acceptable connotation. Germans will have to learn to accept each other and themselves: as compatriots, as copatriots.

STABILITY THROUGH CHANGE

To sum up, the West German success story after World War II has been based on what appears to be a paradox: it was precisely the old Federal Republic's extraordinary, if boring, stability that made breathtaking changes in West German society possible. The slogan “No experiments!” turned out to be a recipe for a thoroughgoing and dramatic modernization experiment. Since reunification, this no longer applies: remaining wedded to the West German status quo will not do with regard to the greatest experiment that the country has faced in its postwar history. This is a message that mainly the West Germans must understand; for their Eastern compatriots, momentous change has become an everyday experience.

Only if there are extraordinary changes in West Germany will it be possible to preserve the old Federal Republic's stability working in and for a reunited Germany. The old Federal Republic has been the best polity in German history ever. Whoever cherishes its humanness would be giving counterproductive advice in suggesting that the West Germans should simply act upon the *weiter so!* (go on!) principle.

The Prussian-Protestant *Staatsidee* (roughly, *raison d'état*, or concept of statehood), which governed the first German nation-state, is as dead as Prussia herself. It is wishful thinking—or fear rooted in ignorance—to believe that it can be resurrected in Berlin. Its true spirit was, in any case, more adequately reflected in Immanuel Kant's ethics or in the courageous attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944 than in Kaiser Wilhelm's bullying Teutonism or the stereotyping “*Jawohl, Herr Hauptmann!*” caricatures. But why should there be any question for a new *Staatsidee* for a reunited Germany? It is already there: represented by what the old Federal Republic

built, “also on behalf of those Germans who were prevented from participating.” The challenge consists in exporting the “Bonn Republic” to Berlin, Germany’s old and new capital.

What, then, can the East German contribution to a reunited Germany be? After more than forty years of communist dictatorship, is there nothing left but a sense of vain suffering, of uselessness? No. Timothy Garton Ash gave the most convincing and edifying response to that question. Thinking of Europeans generally, what he said may be applied to Germans particularly:

At the very least the Europeans from over there . . . have offered us, with a clarity and firmness born of bitter experience, a restatement of the value of what we already have, of old truths and tested models, of the three essentials of liberal democracy and the European Community as the one and only, real existing common European home.⁴³

And they have shown us once again that an open society deserves to be defended against its enemies, of which apathy and indifference are not the least dangerous ones.

This is no cheap consolation. The *plébiscite de tous les jours* by which the Germans have to become a full-fledged nation is a thorny path. The point of no return lies behind. United Germany will happen when and if Germans do not lose the sense of wonder and gratitude for what happened in the days when the Wall fell, when unity was born of liberty, not of blood and iron. Recalling the time when the seemingly impossible happened, not forgetting the suffering of the seventeen million and countless other millions in Eastern Europe, will remind them that the effort of change is worthwhile.

ENDNOTES

¹Empirical data (such as poll results) which are not attributed to specific sources have been taken from the following publications: IPOS Institute (Institut für praxisorientierte Sozialforschung), *Jugendliche und Erwachsene in Deutschland* (Mannheim: IPOS Institute, April 1993); European Commission, ed., *Eurobarometer 37* (Brussels: June 1992); Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, eds. *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1984–1992* (Munich, New York, London, Paris: K. G. Saur Verlag, 1993); Ronald D. Asmus, “Germany’s Geopolitical Maturation,” in *RAND Issue Paper*, February 1993; Ulrich Becker, Horst Becker, and Walter Ruhland, *Zwischen Angst und Aufbruch. Das Lebensgefühl der Deutschen in Ost und West nach der Wiedervereinigung* (Düsseldorf, Vienna, New York, Moscow: ECON Verlag, 1992); INFAS Insti-

tute, *Deutschland-Politogramm der Woche* 1 (1993) and 22 (1993); communications of the Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Cologne; the Federal Office of Statistics, Wiesbaden; the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Bonn; and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), branch office for Germany.

²Martha Gellhorn, "Ohne Mich: Why I shall never return to Germany," *KRAUTS!*, *Granta* 42 (Winter 1992): 206.

³See, for example, Heinrich August Winkler, "Nationalismus, Nationalstaat und nationale Frage in Deutschland seit 1945," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 27 September 1991, 18–21.

⁴Otto Reinhold in RADIO DDR II, 19 August 1989, 7:00 P.M. (quoted from *DDR-Spiegel* of the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn, 22 August 1989, 7).

⁵Pollsters seldom expressly refer in their questions to concepts such as "the West" or "Western." An exception can be found in IPOS Institute, *Jugendliche und Erwachsene in Deutschland*, 91: Was it wrong for the East Germans to opt in favor of "a Western type of political order" (*eine politische Ordnung nach westlichem Muster*)? Seventy-one percent of the young East Germans said it was "right" (wrong: 28 percent). The most interesting, though predictable, result, however, is that approval of "a Western type of political order" is stronger among highly educated (73 percent) than among less educated (62 percent) young people.

⁶Among the EC population as a whole, 34 percent are in favor of restricting rights of immigrants in the EC ("extend": 17 percent). The strongest advocates of such a policy are the Belgians (48 percent; "extend": 10 percent), followed by the Danes (43 percent; "extend": 5 percent), the British (41 percent; "extend": 7 percent), the Germans (41 percent; "extend": 12 percent), the French (40 percent; "extend": 12 percent), and the Greek (35 percent; "extend": 14 percent).

⁷By "Christian Democrats," I mean here and henceforth the *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (CDU) and the *Christlich Soziale Union* (CSU). The CSU is an independent party limited to the Free State of Bavaria, while the CDU, on the other hand, is active in all *Länder* outside Bavaria. The CDU and CSU make up a single group in the *Bundestag*, the German Federal Parliament.

⁸In 1992, 48 percent of the young people in East Germany—as opposed to 60 percent of their peers in the West—traveled abroad, half of them only to East European countries.

⁹Compare Karl Dietrich Bracher et al., *Republik im Wandel: 1969–1982* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986), 285, 288.

¹⁰Karl Schiller coined this term during his tenure as Minister of Economics of the government of the Grand Coalition of Christian and Social Democrats (Kiesinger/Brandt), 1966–1969. Within the framework of *konzertierte Aktion*, he gathered together representatives from trade unions, employers, and government at a "roundtable of collective reason." Among other terms, the neologism "social symmetry" came from Schiller as well.

¹¹This project, led by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, aimed toward a consensus between the federal government, *Länder*, employers, and employees about the adjustments in economic, financial, and social politics necessitated by reunification.

¹²“(Very) satisfied” with own life: West 95 percent, East 83 percent; “(very) unsatisfied”: West 4 percent, East 16 percent.

¹³Compare also EMNID Institute poll (n-tv, 4 July 1993): “rather optimistic” as to personal prospects 59 percent (West 59 percent, East 57 percent); “rather pessimistic” 35 percent (West 35 percent, East 39 percent). Economic situation in the West “very good” or “good”: 33 percent (West 27 percent, East 54 percent); “bad” or “very bad”: 59 percent (West 64 percent, East 37 percent). Economic situation in the East “very good” or “good”: 18 percent (West 18 percent, East 18 percent); “bad” or “very bad”: 76 percent (West 75 percent, East 79 percent).

¹⁴See INFAS Institute, *Deutschland-Politogramm der Woche* 22 (1993).

¹⁵Karl Otto Hondrich, “Der deutsche Weg. Von der Heilssuche zum nationalen Interessenausgleich,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), 23 June 1990.

¹⁶Heiner Geissler, *Die Neue Soziale Frage. Analysen und Dokumente* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder, 1976).

¹⁷See Ibid., 17–20 and Ludwig Erhard and Alfred Müller-Armack, eds., *Soziale Marktwirtschaft: Ordnung der Zukunft* (Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, Vienna: Verlag Ullstein, 1972), 44–46.

¹⁸Compare, for instance, *Bulletin* 26 (26 March 1993): 221 (ed. The Federal Press and Information Office); *Bulletin* 61 (9 July 1993): 648–51; and *Bulletin* 71 (8 September 1993): 745–46.

¹⁹According to the Federal Ministry of the Interior (as of April 1993), approximately 1.1 million people entered Germany in 1992: 230,000 “ethnic Germans,” mostly from the former Soviet Union; 438,000 asylum seekers (of whom, according to independent court decisions, only 5 percent had been persecuted in their home countries for political, racial, or religious reasons); 11,000 “quota” refugees and 252,000 de facto refugees, mostly from the former Yugoslavia; 180,000 illegal immigrants. Taking into account the overlap of some of these categories (of the 252,000 de facto refugees, 122,000 are asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia) and those immigrants who left Germany again, the sum comes realistically to about 900,000 (which is approximately 1.2 percent of the current German population).

²⁰In the 1950s, “nationalistic tones were directed [at them] which would touch us today, looking back, in an odd way. The former anti-republican and anti-democratic forces that fell for National Socialism after 1930 should be incorporated into the system. They should be won over as members and functionaries of the new mass party of the SPD.” See Peter Lösche and Franz Walter, *Die SPD: Klassenpartei-Volkspartei-Quotenpartei* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992), 135. In Ibid., 376, the authors name Frankfurt am Main as an example of the transfer of social democratic voters to radical right-wing parties taking place in big cities. In this metropole and other communities of the *Land* of Hesse, in the local elections of 7 March 1993, the SPD lost *per saldo* more votes to the so-called *Republikaner* (39,000) than the CDU (33,000); the Right/Left dichotomy is also contradicted by the fact that in this election the CDU lost *per saldo* more votes to the Greens (23,000) than the SPD (9,000). A very similar trend could be observed in the *Land* elections of 19 September 1993 in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg where the SPD lost an unproportionately

high amount of voters in traditional workers' districts and in socially marginalized areas to radical right-wing parties.

²¹According to an EMNID Institute poll (n-tv, 14 March 1993), this circle of persons constituted, in March 1993, 40 percent of those entitled to vote (13 percent "N/A"; 27 percent "No Party") in all of Germany. In the 7 March 1993 local elections in Hesse, the "Party of Nonvoters" reached 1.23 million; the SPD, on the other hand, only reached 1.07 million and the CDU 0.94 million.

²²Hondrich, "Der deutsche Weg."

²³See Jane Kramer, "Neo-Nazis: A Chaos in the Head," *The New Yorker*, 14 June 1993, 59.

²⁴Compare Helmut Willems, Stefanie Würtz, and Roland Eckert, "Fremdenfeindliche Gewalt: Eine Analyse von Täterstrukturen und Eskalationsprozessen" (research report, ed. *Bundesministerium für Frauen und Jugend und Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*), Bonn, June 1993, 146.

²⁵Wolfgang Zapf, *Wandlungen der deutschen Elite 1919–1961* (Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1965), 199–200.

²⁶See Jürgen Rüttgers, *Dinosaurier der Demokratie. Wege aus der Parteienkrise und der Politikverdrossenheit* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1993), especially 239–55.

²⁷This contrast was introduced (or at least popularized) by the former Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher as a rhetorical device.

²⁸Germany has so far (as of April 1993) accepted three hundred thousand refugees from the former Yugoslavia (Italy: 16,000; Spain: 4,700; United Kingdom: 4,400; France: 4,200). Germany's proportion of the EC's intake of asylum seekers was 58 percent in 1990 and 1991, and soared to 79 percent in 1992. In relation to Western Europe as a whole, it was 47 percent in 1990 and 1991, and no less than 65 percent in 1992. The number of refugees worldwide is currently estimated to be about eighteen million, of whom 8 percent have been admitted by Germany.

²⁹Johannes Gross, "Notizbuch Johannes Gross. Neueste Folge," *FAZ-Magazin*, 26 February 1993, 10.

³⁰Ralf Dahrendorf, *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland* (Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1965), 432, 434.

³¹Klaus Gotto, "Erosion christlicher Wertvorstellungen? Kritisch Anfragen an Kirche und Unionsparteien," in Anton Rauscher, ed., *Christ und Politik* (Cologne: Verlag J. P. Bachem, 1989), 14.

³²See Albrecht Lehmann, *Im Fremden ungewollt zuhaus: Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene in Westdeutschland 1945–1990* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1991), 7; and Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1993), 227: "Looking back from the 1970s, Willy Brandt himself observed that the peaceful integration of these millions of refugees and expellees was one of Konrad Adenauer's greatest services to his country."

- ³³See Lösche and Walter, *Die SPD: Klassenpartei-Volkspartei-Quotenpartei*, chap. II 1–4 for the SPD; for the CDU, see Gotto, “Erosion christlicher Wertvorstellungen?”
- ³⁴Helmut Klages and Thomas Gensicke, “Geteilte Werte? Ein deutscher Ost-West-Vergleich,” in Werner Weidenfeld, ed., *Deutschland: Eine Nation—doppelte Geschichte* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1993), 49–50. See also Dahrendorf, *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland*, 471.
- ³⁵Value complexes such as “experiences something crazy more often; adventure,” “dress fashionably; treat yourself to a little luxury,” “completely enjoy love and sex,” “purchase a car,” “live in a comfortable home,” etc. increased in importance. In contrast to the West, however, “idealistic” values related to society declined in the same period. See Klages and Gensicke, “Geteilte Werte?,” 54–55.
- ³⁶See Willems, Würtz, and Eckert, “Fremdenfeindliche Gewalt,” 41–42, 113–22.
- ³⁷See Klaus Schroeder and Jochen Staadt, “Der diskrete Charme des status quo: DDR-Forschung in der Ära der Entspannungspolitik,” *Leviathan*, March 1993, 24–63. See also Timothy Garton Ash, *Im Namen Europas: Deutschland und der geteilte Kontinent* (Munich, Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1993), 312–42.
- ³⁸Hans Magnus Enzensberger, “Die Schwierigkeiten der Deutschen mit sich selbst,” interview in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 19 January 1993.
- ³⁹For a more detailed analysis of the history of German citizenship laws and its meaning for the concept of national unity, compare the excellent monography by Hubertus von Morr, *Der Bestand der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit nach dem Grundvertrag* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1977).
- ⁴⁰Timothy Garton Ash, “Germany Unbound,” *The New York Review of Books*, 22 November 1990, 15.
- ⁴¹*Ibid.*, 12.
- ⁴²The new legal provisions are still little used by those who are entitled because Germany, like many, or most, other countries demands that those seeking naturalization give up their former citizenship. Further liberalization measures—also with regard to the problem of dual citizenship (which, above all, applies to the 1.8 million Turks living in Germany)—are currently being discussed.
- ⁴³Timothy Garton Ash, *We the People* (Cambridge: Granta Books, 1990), 155–56.